

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 10, 20, 21, 23, and 26 are presently active in this case. Claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 11-19, 22, 24, 25, and 27-37 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

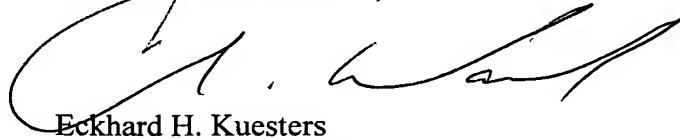
The claims that were objected to and rejected in the outstanding Official Action have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, the Applicants submit that all of the outstanding issues have been rendered moot.

Pending Claims 1, 4, 6, 9, 10, 20, 21, and 26 have been allowed. The Applicants note that Claim 23 remains pending. Since Claim 23 has not been objected to or rejected for any reason, and since Claim 23 depends from allowed Claim 21, the Applicants submit that Claim 23 is also in condition for allowance.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Eckhard H. Kuesters
Registration No. 28,870
Attorney of Record

Christopher D. Ward
Registration No. 41,367

Customer Number
22850

Tel. (703) 413-3000
Fax. (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 10/01)

EHK:CDW:brf
I:\atty\cdw\24xxxx\246584US6 CONT\am6.doc